

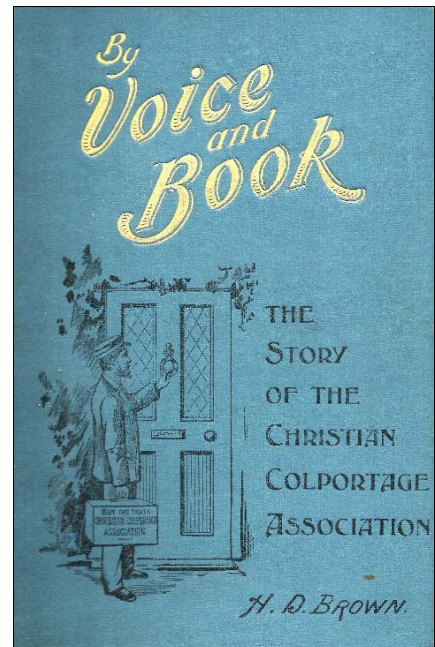
THE CHRISTIAN COLPORTAGE ASSOCIATION

Dave Hill

I have a 1909 postcard showing Harlands & Wolff's shipbuilding yard at Belfast. It is in Misch & Co's "Camera Graphs" series No 52011 Belfast. In addition to the title, above the picture it bears a line from the bible "Your life is hid with Christ in God" Col. III.3. On the back above Misch's name it reads "Sold by the Christian Colportage Association 37, Farringdon Street EC"

*Sold by Christian Colportage Association 37 Farringdon Street E.C.
Misch & Co's "Camera Graphs". Series No. 52011. Belfast.*

I've bought a little 1908 book "By Voice and Book, The Story of the Christian Colportage Association" by H. D. Brown. The Association was founded in 1874 by H D Brown, among others, for the purpose of disseminating the Bible and it's message. The name "Colporteur" comes from the French for a vendor of news; in English it is usually taken to mean religious texts. The Association thought that whilst the Religious Tract Society did missionary work in Scotland, and other Missionary Societies worked in foreign parts (like the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Church Missionary Society), there ought to be a non-denominational mission to England.



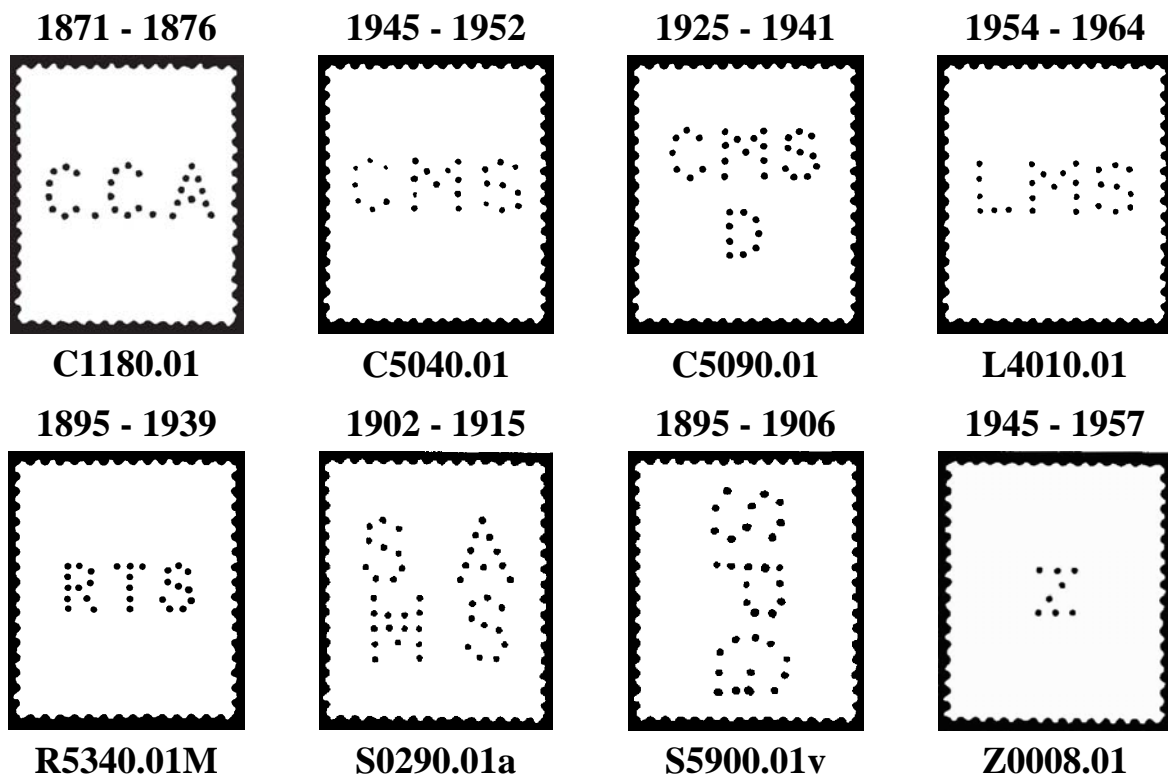
Especially they were worried about the standard of literature available to the working man and young boys.

They printed and sold door-to-door, Bibles and religious texts. By 1908 they had 120 "colporteurs" working around the country, a "bible van" and horse, and they had stalls at various fairs and markets, even at the seaside. In 34 years they had sold 25 million Bibles, Testaments, books and magazines and 6 million scripture texts worth £400,000 as well as distributing 16 million free Gospel tracts.

I illustrate their name on the postcard and the front cover of the book. Each colporteur had his "pack", a suitcase with the name of the

Association on it containing his stock of books and missives. I am unsure if the Association is still active, I don't think so. I am also unsure whether they sold many postcards. I've not seen any others, or why they chose this particular card of Belfast, whether it had some particular significance or it was just cheap surplus stock that was overprinted by chance.

The Association possibly used perfin C.C.A - C1180.01. It was one of many Missionary Society's that used Perfins. Others were:- The Religious Tract Society, founded in 1779, used various perfins RTS - R5340.01M etc. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (in Foreign Parts) were founded in 1701 and used various perfins SPG S5900.01, etc. They used Allchin's for some perfins and many different combinations of the different letters "SPG" exist, Allchin's perfins are called "SPG" type as the SPG ones were the first discovered.



The London Missionary Society was founded in 1795 and used perfin LMS - L4010.01. The South American Missionary Society was founded in 1844 and used perfin SAMS - S0290.01a. In 2010 they merged with the Church Missionary Society (founded 1799) who used various perfins CMS and CMS/D C5040.01 and C5090.01. The Church of England Zenana Missionary Society used perfin Z - Z0008.01